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C O N F I D E N T I A L ALGIERS 001508

SIPDIS

NSC FOR TIM POUNDS

E.O. 12958: DECL: 07/18/2015

TAGS: [PTER](#) [PREL](#) [WI](#) [AG](#) [MO](#)

SUBJECT: BELKHEIR RAISES MOROCCAN REQUEST TO DESIGNATE
POLISARIO AS A TERRORIST ORGANIZATION

REF: NEA/MAG-EMBASSY ALGIERS E-MAIL JULY 15

Classified By: Charge d'Affaires Marc Sievers, Reason 1.4 (b) (d)

1. (C) During a July 18 meeting with Charge on other issues, Presidential Chief of Staff Belkheir raised reports that Morocco has requested the U.S. to designate the Polisario Front as a terrorist organization. Belkheir asserted that an American organization called The Institute for the Prevention of Terrorism in Oklahoma had listed the Polisario among a list of Algerian terrorist organizations. Since the Institute reportedly receives U.S. Government funding, Belkheir asked whether its listing of the Polisario signified an official U.S. decision to designate the Polisario. Such a categorization of the Polisario was false, Belkheir said, commenting that Polisario had never used terrorist tactics throughout its thirty-year struggle to achieve Sahrawi independence.

2. (C) Belkheir noted that Algeria and the U.S. were allies against terrorism, adding that both countries had benefited from this cooperation, which continued to develop. Should the U.S. decide to designate the Polisario, however, that would "raise questions about the bases of our cooperation." Charge responded that he was not aware of any U.S. decision to designate the Polisario as a terrorist organization, adding that he was unfamiliar with the Institute for the Prevention of Terrorism, but it appeared to be a private organization. Belkheir said his principal concern was how did the U.S. plan to respond to the Moroccan request. Charge reiterated that Embassy Algiers had not been informed of any decision to designate Polisario as a terrorist organization, but said he would request Washington confirmation.

3. (C) Action request: According to NEA/MAG's daily e-mail update of July 15, Algerian Embassy Polcouns Derdouri made a similar demarche to S/CT's Mike Miller on July 14, although Derdouri referred to TKB.org website vice The Institute for the Prevention of Terrorism -- we are unfamiliar with both. Although S/CT reportedly denied any change in U.S. policy toward the Polisario, we would appreciate the Department's guidance on how to respond to Belkheir.
SIEVERS